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DE RUEHNY #0627 1351258
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 151258Z MAY 06
FM AMEMBASSY OSLO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3973
INFO RUEHXP/ALL NATO POST COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
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RUEHTI/AMEMBASSY TIRANA PRIORITY 0203
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E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/11/2016
TAGS: [MARR](#) [NATO](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [AF](#) [NO](#)
SUBJECT: NORWAY WILL LOOK AGAIN AT ISAF CAVEATS

REF: STATE 74035

Classified By: Pol/Econ Counselor Mike Hammer,
reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) On May 11, we delivered reftel points to Leif Larsen, MFA Security Policy Section DAS, and to MOD USA Desk Officer Erling Alvestad. Larsen and Alvestad agreed to coordinate between their ministries and consider our request. The MOD noted that Norway's caveat was out of step with its previous commitment to lift all of its (few) caveats, since, in principle, Norway agrees that national caveats have a deleterious effect on NATO commanders' operational flexibility. The new caveat appears to have been imposed when Norway deployed forces to the quick reaction force (QRF) in Mazar-i-Sharif.

¶2. (C) Comment. In the past, Norway has been a strong supporter of our efforts in NATO against national caveats. However, the MOD and MFA are now under the leadership of a government that includes the ultra-leftwing Socialist Left party (SV). SV would prefer to have no Norwegian troops in Afghanistan. Norway's current political leadership most likely insisted on imposing the restrictions on the Norwegian QRF contingent, overruling the MOD and MFA bureaucracies, in order to appease SV. In the absence of internal government coalition pressure to keep the Norwegian national caveat, we are confident that there would be broad support in both ministries for lifting all caveats; however, given the high-level of internal government efforts to appease SV, we are not confident that the ministries' advice to their ministers will be followed, despite our active engagement.

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